

Message Text

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ACTION DHA-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-31 DODE-00 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6011
INFO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 6053

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, SREF, ET
SUBJECT: UPDATE ICRC OPERATIONS/ETHIOPIAN AREA

REF: ADDIS ABABA 5832

1. SUMMARY: ICRC AFRICA REPRESENTATIVE SCHMIDT IN 10/17/77
CALL ON AID DIRECTOR/POL COUNS ADVISED THAT ICRC ETHIOPIAN/
SOMALIAN OPERATIONS ARREAR TO BE DEVELOPING SATISFACTORILY.
SUPPLY TRANSPORT TO/IN ETHIOPIA BECOMING DIFFICULT IN AB-
SENCE FRENCH AIRLIFT/TRUCKS, PRESENCE SEASONAL RAINS IN
OGADEN. ANTICIPATE POSSIBLY 60,000 NEW WAR VICTIMS IN BALE.
END SUMMARY.

2. AS REGULAR UPDATE, ICRC GENEVA DELEGATE GENERAL FOR AFRICA,
FRANK SCHMIDT, ACCOMPANIED BY NEW ICRC/ETHIOPIA REPRESENTA-
TIVE, EDDI LEEMANN, PROVIDED EMBASSY/AID WITH GENERAL BACK-
GROUND ON PRESENT ICRC OPERATIONS IN AREA. SCHMIDT SAID THAT
WHILE A SATISFACTORY ICRC/EPMG RELATIONSHIP APPEARS TO BE
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DEVELOPING, TRANSPORT/DISTRIBUTION OF SUPPLIES, ESPECIALLY
EVACUATION FROM THE PORT OF ASSAB IS PRINCIPAL PRESENT OPER-
ATIONAL PROBLEM. HE NOTED THAT ANTICIPATED FRENCH AIRCRAFT
FOR THIS MOVEMENT IS NOT NOW LIKELY: FRENCH, HE OBSERVED,
INSIST ON UTILIZING MILITARY AIRCRAFT SUPERIMPOSED WITH RED
CROSS SYMBOL AND FLOWN BY UNIFORMED MILITARY AIRCREWS WHICH
TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE BY ICRC RULES. ADDITIONALLY, FRENCH

WANT PAYMENT FOR THE ASSISTANCE, SCHMIDT ADVISED HE INVESTIGATING ALL OTHER ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING TRUCKING AND MAY APPROACH USG AT FUTURE POINT IF AIRLIFT ONLY POSSIBILITY AND SITUATION BECOMES CLEAR EMERGENCY. GROUND TRANSPORT PROVISIONS HIGHLY LIMITED BY BOTH ETHIOPIAN AVAILABILITY/PRIORITIES AND TENUOUS ROAD SECURITY.

3. IN AREA OF ICRC MANAGEMENT, SCHMIDT SAID THAT A RESIDENT SWISS NATIONAL WITH PRIOR ICRC/ETHIOPIA EXPERIENCE, ANDRE EVALET, HAS BEEN HIRED TO WORK WITH LEEMANN. ICRC HAS ACCEPTED NECESSITY OF SOME ENCROACHMENT ON TRADITIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND AGREED TO WORK THROUGH EPMG RELIEF COMMISSION (RRC) FOR BOTH ASSISTANCE COORDINATION AND DELIVERY. SCHMIDT SAID CONSIGNEE WILL BE ETHIOPIAN RED CROSS, HOWEVER, AND ICRC SHIPPING/DELIVERY DOCUMENTATION UTILIZED AT EVERY POINT WITH SPECIFIC ICRC TRANSIT/END USE MONITORING. SCHMIDT SAID HE THOUGHT RELATIONSHIP WOULD BE SATISFACTORY. (HOWEVER, IN 10/18/77 DISCUSSION WITH MISSION/DRO, RRC CHIEF, SHIMELIS, SAID HE WAS QUOTE NOT HAPPY WITH ICRC: THEY WERE TOO SLOW AND MORE POLITICIZED THAN EVEN HE THOUGHT INITIALLY UNQUOTE. FYI. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT DIFFICULT ICRC/RRC RELATIONSHIPS HAVE EXISTED SINCE 1973 IN ETHIOPIA, ESPECIALLY IN REGARD TO ICRC ERITREAN ASSESSMENT ATTEMPTS. END FYI.)

4. SCHMIDT NOTED NO CHANGES IN NUMBERS OF THOSE AFFECTED REQUIRING ASSISTANCE IN THE DIRE DAWA/HARRAR AREA. HE SAID
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THE FIGURE WAS STILL ROUGHLY 40,000 (EARLIER FIGURE WAS 50,000). HE DID INDICATE, HOWEVER, THAT IN THE BALE PROVINCE AREA, A PRELIMINARY ETHIOPIAN RED CROSS REPORT HAS ESTIMATED AS MANY AS 60,000 WAR VICTIMS CURRENTLY BETWEEN SHASHOMENE AND GOBA. LEEMANN EXPECTS TO MAKE FORMAL ICRC AREA SURVEY O/A 10/26/77 TO CONFIRM THE SITUATION. SCHMIDT OBSERVED THAT BOTH THE POSSIBLE PRESENCE OF LARGER NUMBERS OF WAR VICTIMS IN BALE AND FUTURE PRESSURES ON DIRE DAWA MAY NECESSITATE AT SOME POINT ESTABLISHMENT OF A RELIEF CENTER FURTHER WEST OF DIRE DAWA AND SUGGESTED NAZARETH AS PROBABLY MOST APPROPRIATE. (FYI. IN CONNECTION WITH THIS/OTHER CONTINGENCIES. USG SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR POSSIBLE APPEAL FOR TENTS REPEAT TENTS BY ICRC. END FYI.)

5. SCHMIDT ALSO COMMENTED ON SOMALI OPERATIONS BY NOTING THAT ICRC/SOMALIA DELEGATES HAVE NOW SURVEYED THREE PRINCIPAL OGADEN AREAS: GALADI, GODE AND KELAFO WHICH HE ESTIMATED HAVE A TOTAL OF 20,000 DISPLACED PERSONS AT THIS TIME. HE SAID THAT SOME 250 ETHIOPIAN PRISONERS ARE BEING HELD AT GALADI. WHILE ICRC ASSISTANCE IN THE SOMALIA OPERATIONS AREA IS MOVING WELL, ESPECIALLY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FOUR FIELD HOSPITALS IN THE HARGEISA/BERBERA AREA AND INITIAL AIR ARRI-

VAL OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES TO THEM ON SCHEDULE, 220 TONS OF SUPPLIES DESTINED FOR MOVEMENT FROM MOMBASSA ARE BEING HELD UP BY THE GOVERNMENT OF KENYA FOR UNEXPLAINED REASONS. ADDITIONALLY, HE SAID THAT SEASONAL OGADEN RAINS ARE, IN FACT, CAUSING SOME DETERIORATION OF TRACKS AND MAKING GROUND TRANSPORT PROBLEMATIC.

6. SCHMIDT AND LEEMANN CORRECTED EARLIER MISIMPRESSION GIVEN AID PARA 3. REFTEL RE ASSISTANCE TO COMBATANTS. ICRC WILL ASSIST ANY WOUNDED COMBATANTS, AS WELL AS POWS AND DPS.

7. SCHMIDT ADVISED HE WOULD RETURN TO NAIROBI 20/21/77.
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